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INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS

QUESTION OF EAST TIMOR

Note verbale dated 19 May 1997 from the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

1. The Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to call his attention to the information provided by the Mission in its note verbale of 28 June 1996 (A/51/187), as required by Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations, the terms of which remain valid.

As in previous years, since the Government of Portugal continues to be de facto deprived of the exercise of its responsibilities for the administration of the Non-Self-Governing Territory of East Timor, owing to the latter's illegal occupation by a third country thus preventing its people from exercising freely their right to self-determination, it remains unable to provide the information concerning that Territory required by Article 73 e of the Charter. Nevertheless, the Government of Portugal would like to draw attention to the following:

Reports coming from different sources converge in denouncing that the situation in East Timor continues to be very serious, justifying the gravest concerns.

2. Politically related extrajudicial executions continue to occur in East Timor. The report of the United States State Department on human rights practices in 1996 observed that security forces in East Timor killed two unarmed civilians in April in separate, unrelated incidents. On 25 April, near Baucau,

* A/52/50.

an unarmed East Timorese civilian allegedly attempted to escape questioning by security personnel and was killed when one of them fired what was described as a warning shot. A military officer was convicted of accidentally killing the victim. On 28 April, in Dili, a member of the security forces fired on and killed an unarmed civilian during an altercation caused by the victim's allegedly burning an Indonesian flag. In early August, a student was killed after quarrelling with soldiers and seeking to escape arrest. The first two killings are also mentioned in Human Rights Watch World Report 1997, in which the victims are identified as Paulo dos Reis and André Sousa.

3. According to Amnesty International, in September 1996, Jacinto de Jesus and Luis Ximenes were shot and killed by members of Kostrad (Army Strategic Reserve Command) as they were checked at a border crossing between Baucau and Viqueque, in East Timor (AI index, 41/01/97).

4. In his most recent report, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions stated that, during the period under review, 131 urgent appeals were launched to a number of countries, including Indonesia, concerning extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions. The Special Rapporteur also stated that several allegations of a more general nature were sent to the Governments of different countries or Territories, including Indonesia and East Timor (E/CN.4/1997/60 and Add.1).

5. There were no new efforts by the Indonesian authorities to account for the missing and dead from the 12 November 1991 violent incident at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili. Of those still listed as missing in a report that the military had transmitted to Human Rights Watch/Asia, no additional cases were resolved during the year. On 12 November 1996, several hundred students staged a demonstration in front of East Timor University, in memory of those victims. The United States State Department reports that knowledgeable observers continued to believe that most of the missing are dead and that members of the armed forces know where their bodies are located.

6. The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, in its most recent report, noted that during the period under review it transmitted 10 newly reported cases of disappearance in East Timor. The Working Group also observed that it was particularly concerned about the increase in cases of disappearance which reportedly occurred in 1996 in East Timor.

7. According to Amnesty International, at least 57 prisoners of conscience are serving terms, including life imprisonment, for their peaceful opposition to Indonesian rule in East Timor. These include nine people convicted in relation to the Dili incident of 1991 and 21 sentenced during 1996 in connection with the riots in the town of Baucau in June 1996.

The United States State Department observed that several hundred people were serving sentences for subversion in Indonesia, including many East Timorese, among whom is the East Timorese resistance leader Xanana Gusmão, imprisoned at Cipinang.

8. According to Amnesty International, elements of unfairness during political trials in East Timor include denial of access to lawyers, withholding of

information from the defendants about the timing of trials, use of testimonies during trials which are often extracted under torture and without lawyers being present and refusal to hear witnesses for the defence. In some cases, defendants have been intimidated into refusing legal representation during their trials (AI index, ASA 21/83/96).

9. As stated by numerous sources, security forces regularly detain East Timorese civilians for interrogation. Often these civilians are mistreated for several days and then released. The risk of torture is increased by the fact that detainees are frequently denied access to lawyers and to their families. The United States State Department stressed that, according to credible reports, in January, security forces seized nine East Timorese from their homes in the Zumlai Kecamatan because they were suspected of cooperating with the guerrilla forces. One of the detainees alleged that they had been beaten and mistreated, including being placed in a small underground hole. There were other reports that military and police units make frequent use of random torture against youths to maintain order in urban areas of East Timor.

The United States State Department also reported that in areas where active guerrilla movements exist, such as East Timor, there are instances of people being detained without warrants, charges or court proceedings. Numerous individuals were seized from their homes in Dili and arbitrarily detained in February; there were similar reports of persons being arbitrarily detained in Baucau in June and November, and in Viqueque in December.

10. In his report to the United States Senate's Foreign Relations Committee after his visit to Indonesia and East Timor in May 1996, Senator Claiborne Pell also referred to the Baucau incident, during which approximately 80 people were arrested after street protests against the desecration of a picture or statue of the Virgin Mary. The clashes reportedly caused the death of two people and the wounding of an undetermined number of others (one of whom was identified as Martinho Lopes). The situation in Baucau remained tense for several days while detentions and house-to-house searches were in progress throughout the city, with people missing or being submitted to harsh interrogation methods.

Those numbers were confirmed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which had visited a total of 80 detainees held at two military posts and a police station. ICRC also noted that it had monitored the transfer of a seriously injured person to the military hospital in Dili (ICRC News, 96/24).

11. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention reported several allegations of arbitrary detentions in East Timor, and in at least one case, that of António Neves - charged with participating in a campaign opposing integration during which he distributed leaflets to foreigners - the Working Group considered the detention arbitrary and contrary to articles 9 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see E/CN.4/1997/4/Add.1).

12. The Special Rapporteur on torture was invited by the Government of Portugal to visit Lisbon, in order to meet a number of East Timorese residing in Portugal who had allegedly been tortured by Indonesian security forces prior to leaving the Territory. The report of the Special Rapporteur contained 10 oral

testimonies of torture by means of severe beatings with fists, lengths of wood and iron bars; kicking; burning with cigarettes; and electric shocks, presented by Martinho Ximenes Belo, Moises do Amaral, Egas Dias Monteiro, Alfredo Rodrigues, Valdemar Pereira, Ilídio de Oliveira Camara, António Campos, Victor dos Reis Carvalho, Domingos Savio Correia and Florindo dos Santos. In his conclusions, the Special Rapporteur underlined his belief that the persistence and consistency of the allegations he had received justified continuing concern with the issue, as he found several of the stories (which he subjected to close examination) creditable (see E/CN.4/1997/7).

13. Indonesia's military and security presence in East Timor, in spite of all the promises and announcements, remains largely out of proportion considering the alleged very low level of guerrilla warfare being waged against the Indonesian forces of occupation (the Indonesian military commander claims that East Timorese guerrillas comprise only 188 fighters armed with 88 weapons). The intimidating presence of military force strongly contributes to the tension prevailing in the Territory. In fact, many human rights violations also seem to be the result of unprofessional behaviour shown by troops in East Timor. According to the United States State Department, the Indonesian Government continues to maintain an excessive military presence in East Timor. In his report, Senator Pell observed that there was a massive concentration of military personnel in East Timor, amounting to about 15,403 troops. The vast majority of the troops were not East Timorese, and the presence of this armed and uniformed non-Timorese force caused immense friction and conflict, leading the people of East Timor to feel that they were subjugated by a foreign army of occupation.

14. Although in recent years Indonesia has claimed to have significantly reduced its transmigration programme, non-official Indonesian migrants to East Timor have received indirect government support in the form of development assistance and contracts with the Indonesian armed forces or local government officials stationed in the Territory. According to the United States State Department's report, in the past several years, informal, predominantly Muslim, migration to the Territory has sparked socio-economic tension in urban areas, which was proving to be an even greater concern than the formally sponsored transmigration programme. Massive Indonesian migration has entailed a significant loss in employment opportunities and a growing feeling of exclusion, which are responsible for resentment among the East Timorese - especially among the youth, who are most affected by the high levels of unemployment prevailing in the Territory - and are another cause of the social tension and urban unrest which in recent years have broken out in East Timor.

15. The East Timorese have become increasingly outspoken against any perceived threats to their cultural and religious identity. Several massive demonstrations were held during 1996 and 1997:

(a) On 10 June 1996, youths held a peaceful demonstration in Baucau, demanding that the Government and the Indonesian armed forces take responsibility for an incident that had occurred earlier that month, involving the desecration of a pious image. Eventually clashes with the armed forces broke out leaving several people injured and at least three dead. The suppression of the demonstration was followed by a wave of arrests. Amnesty

International expressed concern at the apparent use of excessive force by the security forces in dispersing the demonstration;

(b) In November, thousands of East Timorese held demonstrations in Dili, Baucau and other locations in support of Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, who together with José Ramos Horta was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1996. The Bishop had previously been the target of government-organized demonstrations in Jakarta and was also subjected to intense government pressure before leaving for Oslo to attend the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony;

(c) According to Amnesty International, at least 8 and possibly 13 East Timorese men were arrested in the aftermath of two violent incidents in the East Timorese capital, Dili, following the return to East Timor of Bishop Belo on 24 December 1996. Amnesty International also stated that it feared those people could be mistreated because of the routine use of torture and ill-treatment by the security forces in attempting to extract confessions (AI index, ASA 21/01/97).

16. United States Congressman Patrick Kennedy, who travelled to East Timor with Bishop Belo, publicly expressed his concern that the Indonesian forces had used the incident as a pretext for yet another brutal crackdown on the people of East Timor.

17. A real sign that the situation in East Timor has not improved is the continuous wave of young East Timorese seeking political asylum abroad, claiming that they fear for their lives. Since January 1996, 85 youths sought political asylum in several Western embassies in Djakarta. Asked by the Reuters news service to comment on the high number of East Timorese who have sought refuge in foreign embassies, Mr. Armindo Maia, acting rector of East Timor University, said that the situation in East Timor was one of terror, tension and persecution. He was not surprised that the youths had chosen to go to foreign embassies, as people in their position were generally in a hopeless situation.

18. In October 1996, the Norwegian Nobel Committee announced its decision to award the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Belo and Mr. Horta for their sustained and self-sacrificing contributions for a small but oppressed people. The Nobel Committee expressed its hope that the award would spur efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict in East Timor based on the people's right to self-determination.

In his speech at the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony, the Chairman of the Nobel Committee, Mr. Francis Sejersted, referred to the violence and terror which resulted from Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor. Of a population of between 600,000 and 700,000, he said, nearly 200,000 have died as the direct or indirect result of Indonesian occupation. And, he said, the violations were still taking place.

On the same occasion Bishop Belo appealed for the release of East Timorese political prisoners as a modest first step that could renew hopes for peace and help the next round of United Nations-sponsored talks.

19. The Nobel Peace Prize award has put the spotlight on East Timor but, unfortunately, has not had any effect on the improvement of the human rights situation in the Territory. On the contrary, the situation has even worsened. In March 1997, Bishop Belo sent a message to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-third session, in which he drew the Commission's attention to the situation of prisoners in East Timor. On a regular basis, he said, the prisoners were tortured, slapped around, kicked and punched. They were plunged into water tanks and burned with cigarettes. The families of suspected youths knew no peace at night. Their houses were searched in the middle of the night and were showered with stones. Individuals were humiliated. He said that those incidents had taken place during the months of December 1996 and January and February 1997, and that the human rights situation had not improved in East Timor.

The Australian-based East Timor Human Rights Centre reported that on 11 January 1997 members of the military-backed Gadapaksi youth organization attacked the areas of Santa Cruz and Quintal Bot in Dili, detaining dozens of East Timorese for their alleged involvement in the demonstrations in support of Bishop Belo on his return from Oslo in December 1996.

According to the news agencies Reuters and Agence France-Presse, about 100 youths were detained in early 1997 in the town of Viqueque, following clashes between young Catholics and members of the Gadapaksi. The fights apparently broke out after members of the Gadapaksi attacked 10 Catholic youths, a priest and his driver, and accused them of holding an illegal meeting. According to Reuters, some sources said they had heard rumours that at least six people had died in the fights.

20. The eighth round of United Nations-sponsored talks between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Indonesia took place at Geneva on 27 June 1996. Since there was still a wide gap between the positions of Portugal and Indonesia concerning the core of the issue, both parties had agreed, since the beginning of the current phase of the dialogue, that a number of confidence-building measures would have to be adopted in order to bridge the existing differences and improve the atmosphere for dialogue.

21. As the Secretary-General stated in his progress report to the General Assembly dated 20 September 1993 (A/48/418), the improvement of the human rights situation in East Timor is sine qua non to progress in the talks. Portugal cannot but express disappointment at the fact that two proposals set forward in this spirit by the Portuguese Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs were both turned down by Indonesia. During the Asia-Europe Meeting held at Bangkok on 2 and 3 March 1996, the Portuguese Prime Minister met with Indonesian President Suharto and presented a proposal under which Portugal would agree to the opening of interest sections in both Lisbon and Jakarta, provided that Indonesia released East Timorese political prisoners and gave assurance of full respect for human rights in East Timor under effective United Nations monitoring. During the London round of talks, on 16 January 1996, Minister Jaime Gama had proposed a trip to Jakarta under agreed terms of reference, during which he would visit Mr. Gusmão.

22. Nevertheless, some positive outcomes resulted from the eighth round of talks, namely, the Secretary-General's intention to facilitate a third all-inclusive intra-East Timorese meeting. The Ministers also agreed to proceed with consultations concerning the proposals of the second meeting for the establishment of an East Timorese cultural centre in Dili and the development of human resources in East Timor.

The all-inclusive intra-East Timorese dialogue is intended to contribute to the Secretary-General's mediation efforts through the free and informal discussion of practical ideas that may have a positive impact on the situation in East Timor and promote a positive atmosphere of dialogue. Portugal strongly supports the Secretary-General's initiative to facilitate this dialogue among East Timorese from different political movements and sectors. The associations of East Timorese are crucial to the successful conclusion of the ongoing efforts to achieve a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution for the question of East Timor.

So far two meetings have been held in Burg Schlaining, Austria. The first took place from 2 to 5 June 1995 and the second from 19 to 22 March 1996. The fact that, in spite of all limitations, participants have been able to discuss a broad range of issues, forward practical suggestions and agree on common platforms regarding crucial areas of concern for their people, such as the preservation of East Timorese identity, the human rights situation and the effective participation of East Timorese in the administration of their Territory, is in itself a very positive development which should continue to be encouraged.

23. After the election of Kofi Annan as Secretary-General, the previous Secretary-General announced the postponement of the ninth round of United Nations-sponsored talks, which were scheduled to take place in New York on 21 December 1996.

24. Shortly after Mr. Annan's election, the Government of Portugal reiterated its firm commitment to cooperate with the Secretary-General and with the United Nations in pursuing a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement to this protracted problem. The Government of Portugal also welcomed the new Secretary-General's commitment to bring a new impetus to the United Nations-sponsored talks between Portugal and Indonesia.

Ambassador Jamsheed Marker was appointed as the Secretary-General's Personal Representative for the question of East Timor, with a mandate to represent the Secretary-General in all aspects of his good offices functions pertaining to the issue, including the talks between the Governments of Portugal and Indonesia and the consultations with a cross-section of East Timorese personalities.

25. Since his appointment, Ambassador Marker had visited Lisbon from 5 to 7 March, where he met with President Jorge Sampaio, Prime Minister António Guterres, Foreign Minister Jaime Gama, members of parliament from several political parties, representatives of non-governmental organizations and East Timorese political leaders and refugees, some of whom had just recently arrived in Lisbon.

26. Ambassador Marker's visits to Djakarta and Dili, in late March 1997, were marked by demonstrations of East Timorese youths. The first took place on 23 March in Dili, when dozens of youths stormed the hotel where he was staying in an attempt to deliver him a message and meet with him. According to reports of that incident, the demonstrators were violently dispersed by Indonesian police forces, resulting in several wounded, dozens of detentions and, according to some reports, possibly the death of four demonstrators.

On 25 March, 33 East Timorese students entered the Austrian Embassy in Djakarta, demanding to meet with the Secretary-General's Personal Representative. A closed-door meeting was subsequently arranged at the office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between Ambassador Marker and three representatives of the students, who delivered a petition. Having accomplished their goal, the students agreed to leave the Embassy after the Indonesian authorities gave assurance that they would be questioned and identified by the police and released within less than 24 hours. However, the Indonesian authorities did not comply with this commitment. The students were in police custody for five days and, according to some reports, during this period they were allegedly pressured to sign a document recognizing the integration of East Timor.

27. United States Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck visited Indonesia and East Timor from 19 to 21 March 1997. Addressing a press conference at the end of this five-day trip, Mr. Shattuck declared that the situation in East Timor remained a matter of serious concern to the international community and certainly to the United States. Mr. Shattuck also voiced United States support for a renewed and intensified dialogue on East Timor, under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.

On 27 December 1996, President Clinton had already reiterated the support of the United States of America for the United Nations-sponsored talks, as well as for the intra-East Timorese dialogue, in his answer to a letter that Senator Russell Feingold, along with other members of the United States Senate, had sent him concerning the question of East Timor. In his reply, President Clinton told Senator Feingold he would take into consideration the idea of a United Nations-sponsored self-determination referendum in East Timor.

28. On 19 March 1997, Monsignor Basílio do Nascimento was installed as Bishop of Baucau. The following message from Pope John Paul II was read during the ceremony: "As it is widely known, the Holy See together with the international community hopes that a truly just and internationally accepted solution will be found to the complex and painful question of East Timor ... This task is particularly and especially urgent in East Timor, where, in the midst of the difficulties and tensions, the people await a specific response to their legitimate aspirations to be recognized for their specific cultural and religious identity".

The previous month, Cardinal Justinus Darmaatmaja, addressing a press conference in Djakarta on behalf of the Indonesian Catholic Church, had declared that Indonesia's "security approach" to the problem of East Timor had failed and called for the inclusion of all East Timorese in finding a solution for the Territory. "An open dialogue is essential", said the Cardinal of Djakarta. The

question of East Timor was also included in the Indonesian Catholic bishop's pastoral letter of 12 February 1997.

29. On 16 April 1997, the Presidency of the European Union submitted a draft resolution on East Timor to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session. In its introduction, the Presidency explained that it had been led to its decision by Indonesia's lack of progress and unwillingness to discuss the implementation of previous commitments. In fact, Indonesia had continuously failed to act upon the Commission's recommendations and to comply with the commitments it had made through consensus Chairman statements at previous sessions. The whole exercise was at risk of becoming ritualized and meaningless, undermining the credibility of the Commission on Human Rights itself. The European Union had made several attempts to engage the Indonesian delegation in discussions on a meaningful draft Chairman's statement but had met with a complete unwillingness on the Indonesian side to reach a compromise.

The resolution on East Timor was co-sponsored by 30 countries and adopted by a roll-call vote of 20 in favour and 14 opposed, with 18 abstentions. By that resolution, the Commission expressed deep concern at the continuing reports of human rights violations in the Territory, including reports of extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture and arbitrary detention; at the lack of progress made by the Indonesian authorities towards complying with commitments undertaken in statements agreed by consensus at previous sessions of the Commission; and at the policy of systematic migration of persons to East Timor. The Commission also called on the Indonesian Government to ensure the early release of East Timorese detained or convicted for political reasons; to clarify further the circumstances surrounding the violent incident that took place in Dili in November 1991; to ensure that all East Timorese in custody are treated humanely and that all trials in East Timor are conducted in accordance with international standards; to cooperate fully with the Commission and its thematic rapporteurs and working groups and to invite those rapporteurs and working groups to visit East Timor; and to provide access to East Timor for human rights organizations. Finally, the Commission called on the Indonesian Government to bring about the envisaged assignment of a programme officer of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the Djakarta office of UNDP, and to provide the officer with unhindered access to East Timor.

30. A common position of the 15 member States of the European Union concerning East Timor, defined by the European Council on the basis of article J.2 of the Treaty on European Union, was formally adopted on 25 June 1996.

In this context, the European Union, referring to its previous declarations on the situation in East Timor, intends to pursue the following aims:

(a) To contribute to the achievement by dialogue of a fair, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor, which fully respects the interests and legitimate aspirations of the Timorese people, in accordance with international law;

(b) To improve the situation in East Timor regarding respect for human rights in the Territory.

In order to pursue the aims stated above, the European Union:

(a) Supports the initiatives undertaken in the United Nations framework which may contribute to resolving this question;

(b) Supports in particular the talks currently being held under the aegis of the United Nations Secretary-General with the aim of achieving a fair, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor, effective progress towards which continues to be hampered by serious obstacles;

(c) Encourages the continuation of intra-East Timorese meetings in the context of this process of dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations;

(d) Calls upon the Government of Indonesia to adopt effective measures leading to a significant improvement in the human rights situation in East Timor, in particular by implementing fully the relevant decisions adopted in this connection by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

On 11 July 1996, 14 non-member countries of the European Union associated themselves with the Union's common position on East Timor.

On 25 November 1996, the European Union's General Affairs Council invited the European Commission to make proposals concerning the follow-up to the common position on East Timor. The Commission has since announced that it is finalizing proposals in the areas of health, sanitation and vocational training aimed at improving living conditions in East Timor.

At the European Union-Association of South-East Asian Nations ministerial meeting in Singapore, held on 13 and 14 February 1997, the European Union also referred to the question of East Timor in its opening statement, welcoming the new Secretary-General's intention to add a new impulse to the United Nations-sponsored talks between Portugal and Indonesia and hoping that they would lead to a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution.

31. The European Parliament has also on several occasions expressed its concern about the human rights situation in East Timor. On 20 June 1996 the European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning once more the Indonesian military repression of the people of East Timor and the illegal occupation of the Territory. The European Parliament also reiterated its solidarity with the people of East Timor in their fight for self-determination and its support for the United Nations-sponsored negotiations aimed at resolving the problem on the basis of respect for human rights and the right to self-determination.

32. A similar stance was adopted at the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States-European Union Joint Assembly on 26 September 1996, through the adoption of a resolution expressing concern about the stepping up of repression of the people of East Timor by the Indonesian military, particularly in the case of young people, and condemning the illegal occupation of the Territory. The Joint Assembly also reaffirmed its support for the action taken under the aegis of the United Nations to resolve the situation in respect of human rights and the right to self-determination.

33. At the sixth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, which took place in Viña del Mar, Chile, from 7 to 11 November 1996, as in previous years, participants expressed their support for the Secretary-General's efforts to achieve a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor in accordance with international law.

34. On 17 July 1996, the final communiqué of the summit that established the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe) expressed the Community's support for the settlement of the question of East Timor in respect of the legitimate rights and interests of its people.

35. At the meeting of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in November 1996, the representative of Sao Tome and Principe, on behalf of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique, stressed the importance of the all-inclusive East Timorese dialogue and encouraged the negotiations between Portugal and Indonesia under the auspices of the Secretary-General.

36. In November 1996, at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, the representative of Angola, on behalf of the member countries of the Southern African Development Community, reaffirmed those countries' firm support for and solidarity with the cause of the people of East Timor.

On the same occasion, the Presidency of the European Union also stated that it continued to follow closely and with serious concern the grave situation prevailing in East Timor and recalled the European Union's Common Position on East Timor, adopted on 25 June 1996.

37. The Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations has the honour to request that the present note be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 90 and 95 of the preliminary list.